



IN THE YEAR OF OUR FORD, 1913—“Old jalopy” owners pining for a new car can take heart. The ancient and honorable vehicle shown above, vintage 1913, is still chugging merrily along. It was bought recently by two Hasbrouck Heights men, one of whom pilots a Constellation to Egypt and back. In the foreground is dentist Robert Young. Behind him is John Thomson, the pilot. (Herald-News Photo)

Fast-Flying Heights Pilot Chugs Around in Ancient Car

Thomson and Bob Young Attract Interest With Jalopy; Still Owns Lightning Fighter

HASBROUCK HEIGHTS—Building and flying gliders at age 14, competing in air races, and piloting a TWA plane to Egypt and back aren’t enough thrills for John Thomson.

Vintage Of 1913

He and a borough friend, dentist Bob Young, have purchased a 1913 Model T Ford which residents have seen chugging up hill and down dale in this borough lately.

They bought it recently from an old couple in Liberty, N. Y., who had been driving it ever since they bought it—that’s 1913.

Thomson is the son of J. Earl Thomson, supervising principal of this borough’s schools from 1914 to 1925, and former Garfield supervising principal. John Thomson made and flew the first glider at Teterboro Airport. He has built some 11 planes and gliders, most of which flew.

Thomson has his own machine tool shop in his cellar, so he doesn’t worry about replacing worn parts in the old car. He’ll just make new ones. The car hasn’t needed anything done to it yet, however. His friend Bob Young, who lives at 200 Henry Street, bought it with him “because he always had a warm spot in his heart for old cars”

Owns “Lightning” Fighter

Thomson still owns a P-38 “Lightning” combat plane of World War II which he last raced in 1940. Its speed ranges around 400 m.p.h. He came in fourth in the Cleveland air races one year, and third in the Miami races. The November 25 storm damaged the plane, and he intends to fix it up.

The first glider Thomson built was similar in construction to the one the Wright brothers built at Kitty Hawk. He had to run down hill with it to take off, and then only was in the air for a few seconds. He later built gliders which he flew up in Binghamton, N. Y. One took off by being towed with a car. Walter P. Thomson, an uncle, now of Johnson City, N. Y., towed him.

The only near serious accident he had was with a two-cylinder plane he built, with pontoons. He used to fly up to Greenwood Lake with it, and once crashed in the middle of that body of water and almost drowned. It was built from a motorcycle engine which cost him \$40. Steel piano wire was used as a tow line for the gliders.

Thomson has been flying for TWA 10 years. He also makes trips to London, Athens, North Africa and Switzerland.